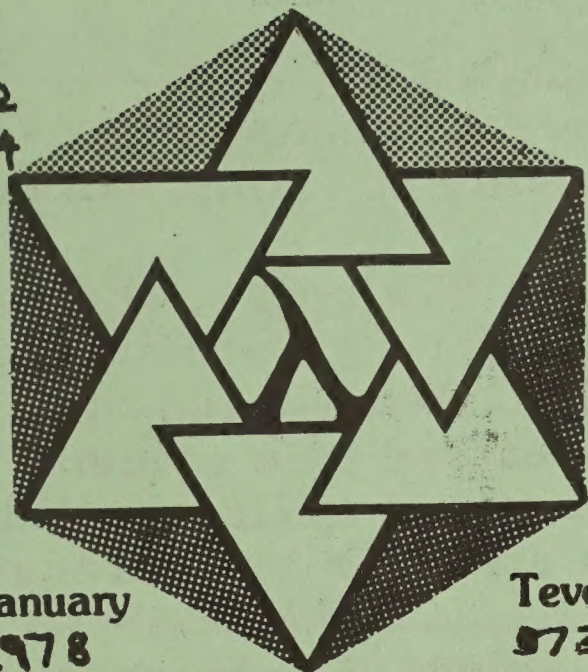


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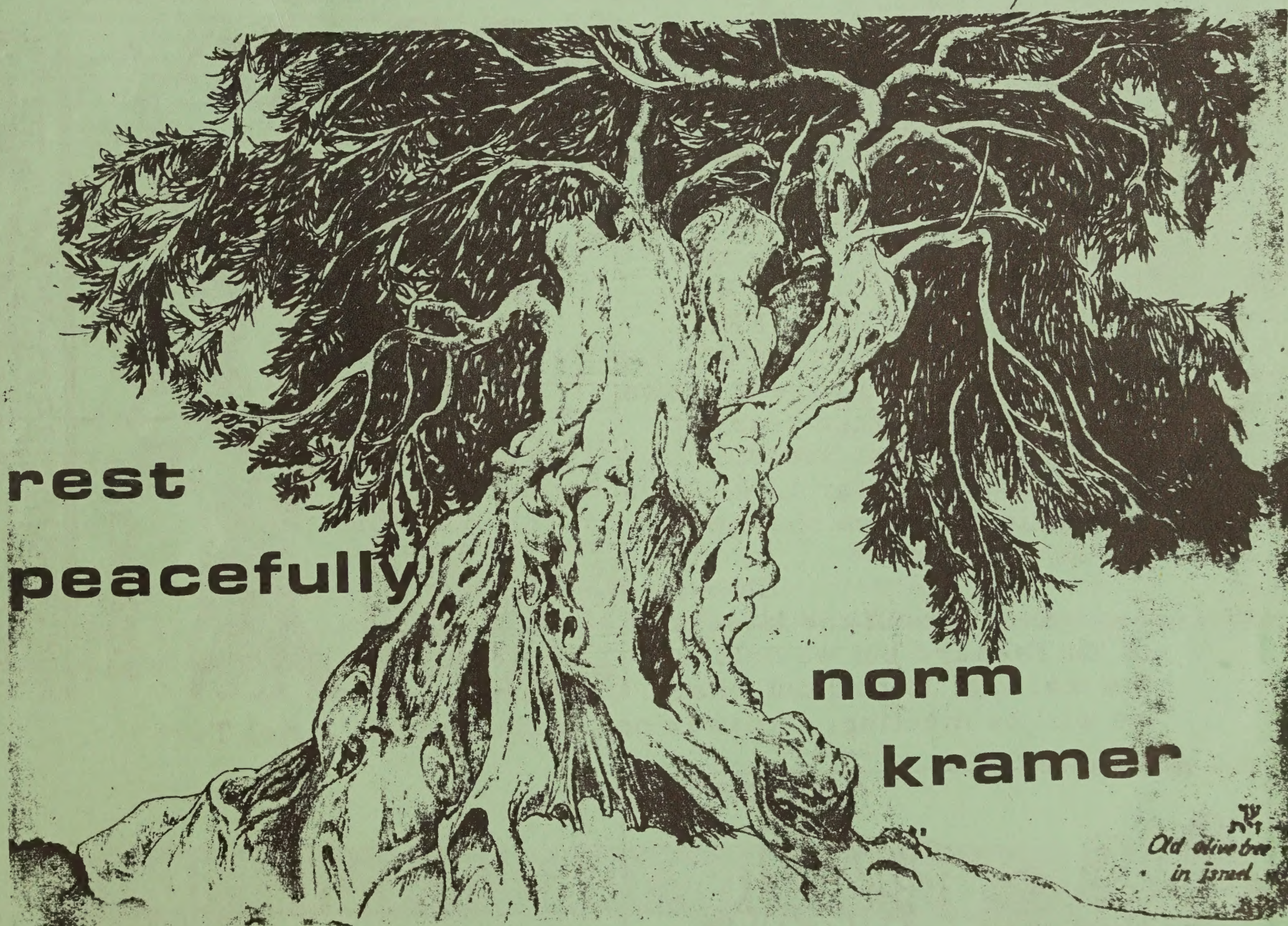


January
1978

Tevet Shevat
5738

SHA'AR ZAHAV

FORWARD



**rest
peacefully**

**norm
kramer**

*Old olive tree
in Israel*

REFLECTIONS

---January 1978

We are 6 months old...

The duality of vision, -so far

we've come, so far we must go.

Our first tragedy, the loss, the death of Norm Kramer...who ended his life with his own hand....our sadness..self recrimination..doubt.

"They" got another one. Norm of the beautiful Hebrew and the beautiful heart. At the funeral home we sat bathed in a golden diffuse of San Francisco afternoon sun...unnatural stillness, self-enforced...is death an equalizer, or am I a stranger in a strange land..again? Surprise..acknowledgement.....RELEASE.....

Allen and Zev, our Allen and Zev spoke the eulogy...a balance Just what we needed to regain focus. Allen -the intellect, Zev- the emotion. There were those words...out loud, in the light... Gay Synagogue...homosexual... who expected it?...I cried, for Norm, for me ...for us. Here was no lie, no euphemism...no closet!!

"Yahweh" this powerful yet gentle God. Whose name means.. "I AM THAT I AM"! ...has given us our battle cry! I am, I was, and I will be. It is Tu B'Shvat, the Birthday of the Trees, Humanities most ancient ecological festival... trees...trees..Tree of Knowledge....TREE OF LIFE.. we plant a seed nurture it.. with patience and care it grows as we enter another year let us pledge to plant Seeds... for Freedom... for Life.

shalom shalom shalom

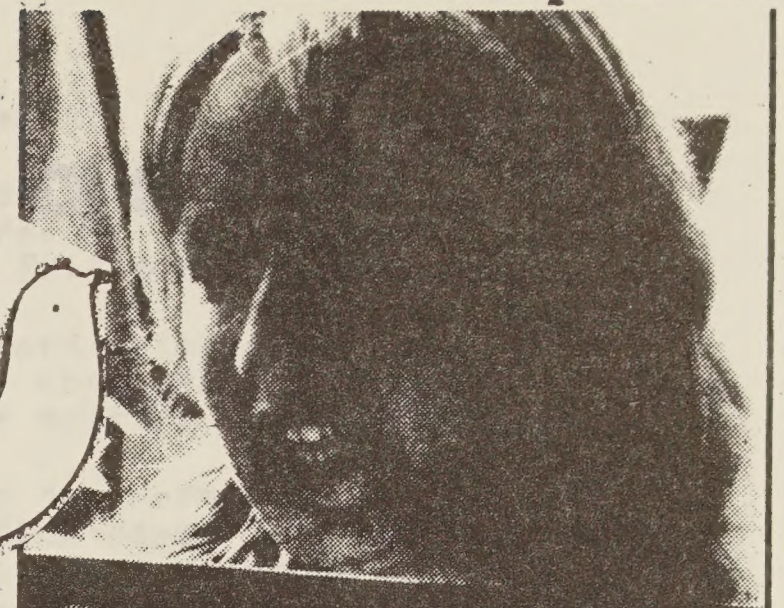
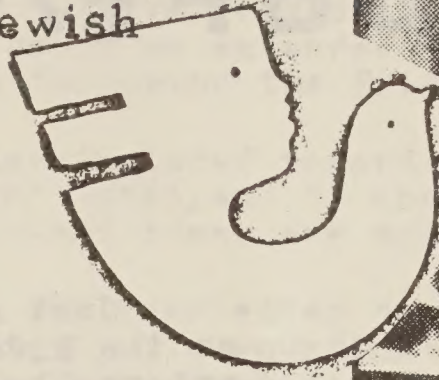
Shamir

p.s: sorry about the lateness of The Forward but we held up the mailing, to find out where we will be meeting...answer on the final page....Kol Tuv!



THE BERKELEY WOMENS COLLECTIVE -

is sponsoring a " Bay Area Jewish
Womens Conference and Fair"
:::Saturday, January 28th, 1978
:::at Graduate Theological Union
2465 Le Conte St. Berkeley
:::No Charge



ISSUES - contd. below

This is the sweeping gay rights resolution overwhelmingly passed in Houston:

SEXUAL PREFERENCE

Congress, state, and local legislatures should enact legislation to eliminate discrimination on the basis of sexual and affectional preference in areas including, but not limited to, employment, housing, public accommodations, credit, public facilities, government funding and the military.

State legislatures should reform their penal codes or repeal state laws that restrict private sexual behavior between consenting adults.

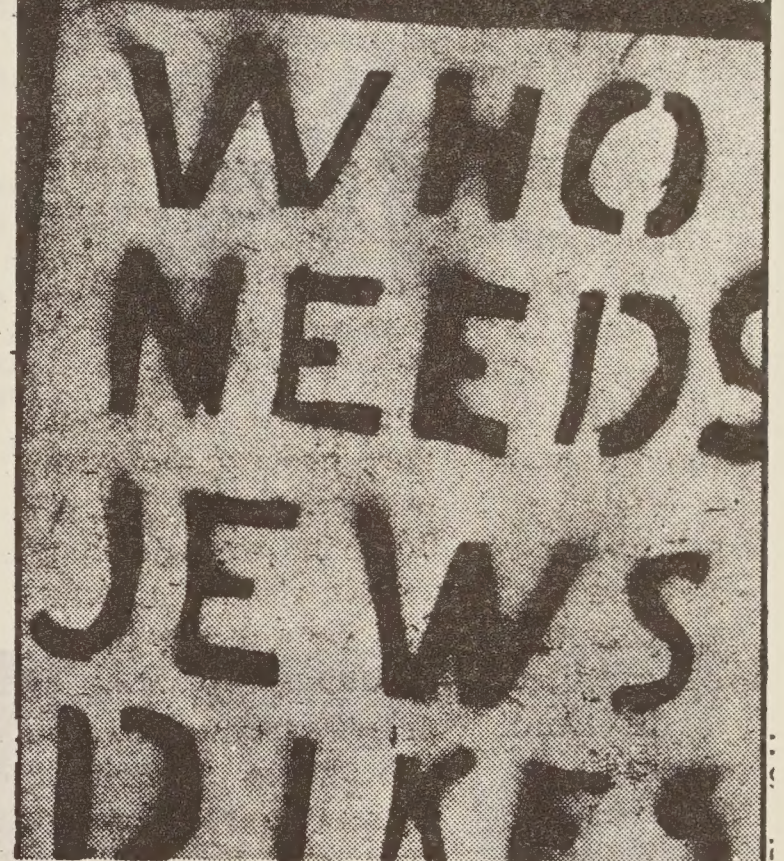
State legislatures should enact legislation that would prohibit consideration of sexual or affectional orientation as a factor in any judicial determination of child custody or visitation rights. Rather, child custody cases should be evaluated solely on the merits of which party is the better parent, without regard to that person's sexual and affectional orientation.

The ADVOCATE, January

*** Being a Gay Jewish Woman
***Is there a need for a specifically
Jewish womens community

MAIDA COHEN will be leading a work-
shop on Lesbians-----

THANK YOU- for our very sucessful Chanukah
Potluck- to the 90 people who celebrated
our "Sisterhood who conducted the entire
service, and the "Brotherhood" who slaved
over a hot stove for the food! What an unexp-
ected sight and pleasure. Thanks for the decorations,
the food, the music...and the warmth.



"I want family, togetherness, Christian
life. I'm a mother and proud of it. I'm
most worried about homosexual teach-
ers. My kids are exposed enough to the
homosexual way of life without having
it thrown in their faces every day. I
don't want my children to have it forced
on them. If the homosexuals stick to
themselves, that's fine. Just don't force
it on me."

Mary
Houston Demonstrator

Fear not, for I am with thee...

Genesis, XXVI, 24

Report

A QUESTION OF STRUCTURE

Just as we should not attempt to impose a settlement on the Middle East, we should not attempt to impose an externally and totally theoretical structure to our experience as an evolving community. Each step toward Peace is made slowly until one day, far in the future, we may come to realize that a just adiabatic Peace has been created. Each piece of outreach, that we as individuals may choose to take upon ourselves, will help to form the structure and design the interaction of our community for the future.

N
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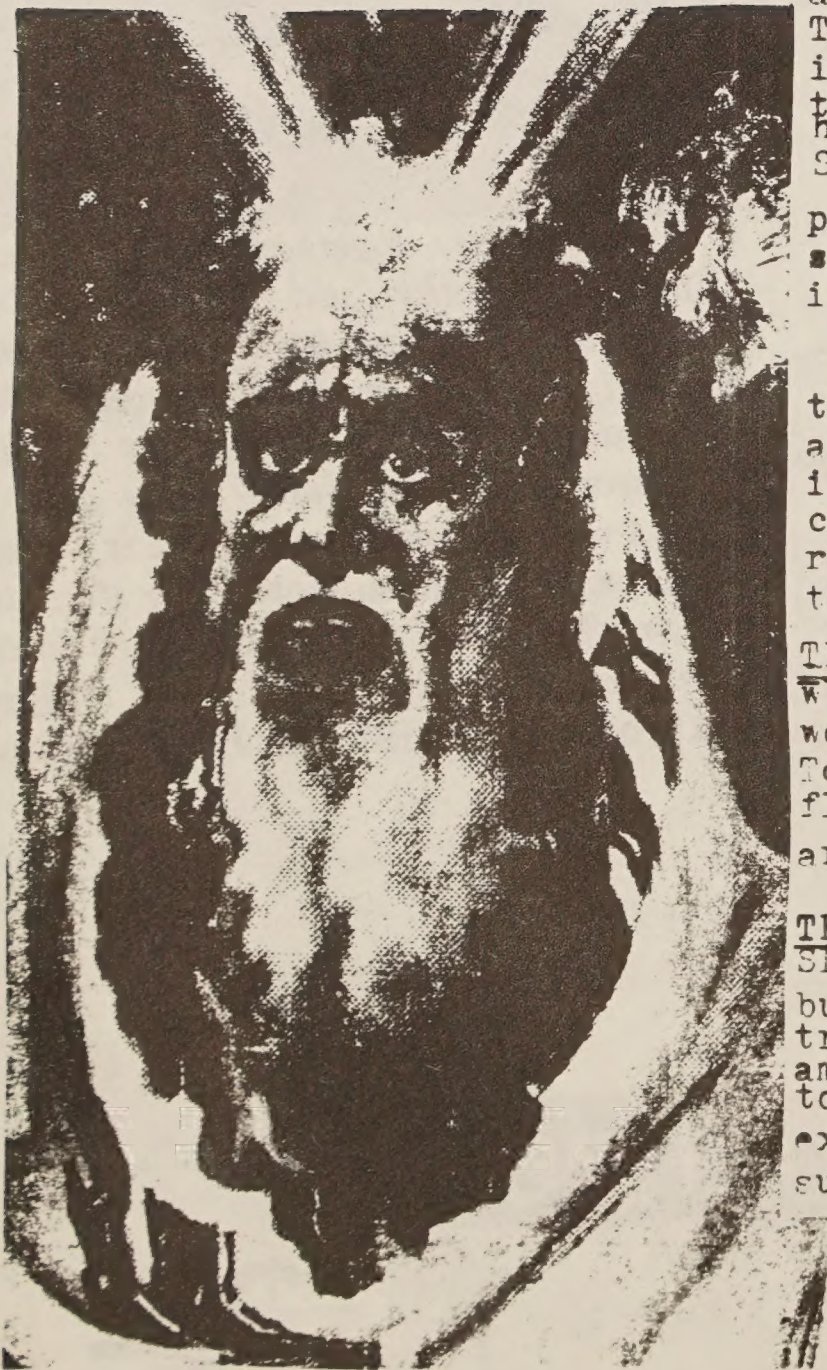
Keeping this rather esoteric root in mind---
maintaining it in our consciousness---
we must begin to ground ourselves in more
earthly tributaries of thought.

It appears to me that we have four basic functions to maintain in order to call ourselves a community, in this formative stage of our evolution. Friday night observance appears to be our time for ingathering and as such entails: Liturgy, Sermons, Oneg, and Funding. There is a fifth aspect of our ingathering that is indirectly related to the four previously noted and that is the Newsletter. This is a monumental task that has been carried out by basically one man in the past, Shamir. I would like to take this moment to express my personal thanks to him for keeping this means of wide spread communication open in which our newly emerging identity has been captured.

Let us examine each aspect of our comm-union as they are presented and grow from that analysis. Let us also not lose sight of the amount of time and energy that is actually required to bring a full experience to the congregation. We must strive toward spreading the responsibility for the maintenance of the congregation to the greatest common denominator.

THE SERMON: Although it is questionable as to exactly what place this time in the service has been used for, we have traditionally used this time to reflect on Torah portions. This time seems to be almost completely flexible and could be used to address any issue or any area of concern.

THE SERVICE: (A RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE VS. A LITURGICAL SELECTION) Please pardon my blatant lack of candor but I cannot caution enough against the adoption of traditions filled with atrophy. There is a tremendous amount of old and new material that could be adapted to our services, within the light of our unique experience. Let us not fall back on things that do not suit us.





THE ONIG: The Onig has included the Kiddish preparations and arrangements. It has tried to address itself to the congregation a variety of topics by bringing in speakers and could be extended to presenting special programs following the Friday night services.

FUNDING: This has included record maintenance on what is raised and spent, and by what means either of these two occur. Many ideas are waiting to be explored.

THE NEWSLETTER: The Newsletter has served as a calendar of events, as a sounding board for ideas and as a clarion bringing important announcements to the congregation. It is our voice not only to ourselves but to the Jewish community at large. It serves as a record of our past experience and as a projection of future intent.

What I would like to suggest is that contact committees be established in each of the aforementioned areas comprised of individuals who are interested in utilizing their involvements in any of those directions. These contact committees would act as a resource and offer guidance to those who's experience in each area is less, or more limited than others in that interest group.

It is hoped that volunteers would rise to sit as members of these contact committees. It is also hoped that we, as a community, will be enabled to tap the vast resources of the community at large, by drafting Contact Persons to take on this responsibility for the sake of the community-- Accountants, Lawyers, Rabbis, Historians Musicians, Dancers, Traditionalists, Ritualists, Feminists, Mystics...

The contact persons for the contact committees would develop articulated referrals and make available, on some level accumulated topical resources for the development of independent organizational maintenance. This would eventually lighten the load and responsibilities of those initially requested to fill these positions.

All of the contact committees will, by the nature of their function, need an organized reference system that can be generally distributed to those wishing access to resource material. This kind of organization would open up our collective resources to the entire congregation achieving a widely diverse maintenance base. These responsibilities may have to be delegated to one or a number of people to insure proper supervision.

A committee resource person or contact person will function as a revolving door, collecting and directing people and projects. Hopefully more than a passing interest will leave a number of people in the same resource positions. Integration of materials and categorization will have to take place as we experiment.



These resource people will be responsible for making the congregation aware if the roles of their committees are not being met on a week by week basis. A monthly calender might be of help in obtaining commitments from individuals. This could be published with the newsletter and include the topics to be dealt with on all levels of the Friday evenings activities. The names and phone numbers of the individuals who will be active in the presentations in order to facillitate communications between like minded interests.

These contact committees could report on general progress and on incubational projects to the congregation directly or through the newsletter as often as once a month. Contact committees would be made up of individuals who have volunteered and actively participated in the development of their interest areas. These people would be consentually recognized as having functioned in such a way and would thereby form a nucleus in general policy and decision making procedures.

creating

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PROPOSAL FOR SETTING UP A STEERING STRUCTURE:

Individual functional committees should be established--for example, liturgy, newsletter, Oneg Shabbat, fund-raising--and embodied in the by-laws. These should only be core committees, meaning committees whose existence will always be necessary for the operation of the synagogue. Anyone may join any committee. Each committee will elect a chairperson for a period of six months. The chairpeople who are elected in this manner will constitute the steering committee. The steering committee should meet once a week, or once every two weeks, to carry on the business of the congregation. The person who moderates the steering committee meetings should rotate each meeting.

The steering committee will have the power to make decisions about temple business and policy on a day-to-day basis. The decisions and policies of the steering committee shall be subject to review and approval by the congregation as a whole, as determined by congregational meetings to be held once each three months.

The congregation as a whole should elect a Recorder, who will be responsible for keeping the records of the Congregation. This person should possibly be the head of the newsletter committee automatically.

The head of the fund-raising/finance committee and the Recorder should be the individuals authorized to sign checks on behalf of the Congregation. One other person should be authorized to sign checks, as well, in the event of absence by the Recorder and Fundraiser. TWO SIGNATURES must be required on all checks. Expenditures must be approved by the steering committee.

To satisfy incorporation requirements, the members of the steering committee should constitute the Board of Directors. The Recorder elected by the congregation should also be a steering committee member.

Any member of the Congregation may attend and speak at steering committee meetings, but only steering committee members may vote at steering committee meetings. This is because individual members who attend the meetings speak only for themselves, whereas the steering committee members have been elected by their constituencies and they represent the committees which elected them.

One of the core committees should be a community relations committee which should have the responsibility of being our liaison to the rest of the community--gay, straight, Jewish and non-Jewish. This committee should definitely have co-sexual leadership and it is possible that we might

want to have these two people elected at a congregational meeting, as is the Recorder. The chairpeople of the community relations committee will be our contact people with the "outside world." Their names should appear in our literature as the persons for outsiders to contact, for whatever reasons. This is to make communication easier for people outside of the congregation. It should be made clear, however, that the contact people cannot make any commitments or policy statements on behalf of the congregation without the approval of the steering committee (or congregational meeting). This does not mean that they must get committee approval each time they open their mouths, since they can speak about existing policies. If the congregation does not have a position or policy about a particular issue, it should be determined at the steering committee before the contact people make any statements to anyone outside the congregation. Since the heads of this committee will be liaison people, possibly they should be the ones authorized to sign checks in the absence of the Recorder or Finance person.

AD HOC COMMITTEES: From time to time it will be necessary for ad hoc committees to form in order to carry out specific functions of a temporary or seasonal nature. (Seder committee, for example). These committees will not be included specifically in the by-laws. They may be created in the same way as other committees, meaning anyone may join and a chairperson will be elected. The chairperson will attend steering committee meetings for the life of the committee and may vote only on subjects relating to the function of the ad hoc committee. If nobody volunteers to be on a committee (it is possible, incidentally, to have committees of one member only under this system) the steering committee may appoint someone to carry out a particular function. Such an appointee could attend steering committee meetings and vote on issues relating to his function, as outlined above.

With respect to the issue of outside contact, we should consider immediately getting a telephone number and answering service (runs about \$30-40 a month), so that people who wish to get in touch with us may do so on the spur of the moment. The community relations chairpeople should be responsible for getting the messages and answering them or distributing them to the appropriate person in the congregation. (Or the Recorder could be the person to collect and distribute the messages.)

NOTE ON INCORPORATION: We are now incorporated. State law requires that we have a Board of Directors. We can write our by-laws to state that the steering committee comprises the Board. For that purpose, only permanent members of the steering committee would be considered "Directors"--in other words, chairpeople of ad hoc committees who are temporarily on the steering committee would not be included.

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FURTHER NOTES: Although any person can be on as many committees as they like, I think we should not permit anyone to be chair of more than one committee. This will force leadership positions to be spread among more members of the congregation.

Six months is a good term for holding office in this kind of organization. If someone is doing a good job and wants to remain in office, they can always be re-elected. On the other hand, if they are tired of the job, or things aren't working out, we won't be saddled with them for a whole year.

We may want to set up some sort of formal recall procedure to get someone out of office who is not working out, or who loses interest, or disappears, etc.

Since the Finance/Fundraising person will be signing checks, we may want to have him elected by the congregation as a whole.

Even though a person cannot be chair of more than one committee (and thereby be a voting member of the steering committee), they can be chair of a committee and chair of a subcommittee, or chair of two subcommittees.

The whole point of a steering committee leadership structure is collegiality. If there are not enough core committees established in the by-laws to provide a large enough group, we may want to elect a number of steering committee members-at-large. To get to a large enough steering committee to be both workable and representative, we ought to be shooting for some 12 to 15 members on the steering committee. Fewer than that would not feel very representative of the congregation; more would start to be a hassle--for example, it starts to be a nuisance to contact more than that number of people if an emergency meeting is necessary, not to mention the fact that it starts getting hard to find a place to meet (like in someone's apartment) when there are more than that number.

I don't think we can make the leadership of each committee co-sexual for a number of reasons. First, I'm not sure that there are enough women to go around, even if they are interested. Second, I'm not sure that there are that many people, in general, who are interested in being committee chairs, or who won't be once they realize how much work some of these jobs will entail. (Remember that the committee chair is responsible not only for his own committee's functions, he is ALSO responsible for his steering committee duties. This can get to be quite time-consuming.) By having only one chairperson of each committee, the people who are willing to devote the time and energy can be spread around better. The exception would be the community relations committee, which should have co-sexual leadership (both of whom should be voting members of the steering committee.)

We would like to see our congregation try a different kind of organization than is usual in synagogues because we feel that the traditional hierarchy concentrates too much power in the hands of too few. This is very alienating to many of us.

We propose

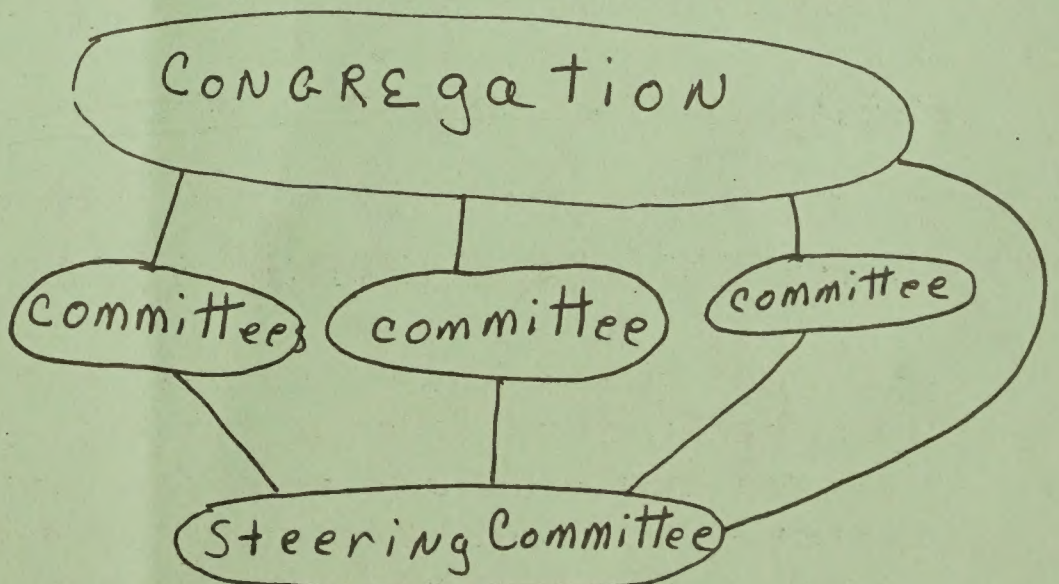
- (1) that there be committees to take care of the various workings of the congregation: examples are the financial committee, the ritual committee, the
- (2) that each committee would choose one member to serve on a steering committee
- (3) the steering committee will be made up of the chosen members of each committee, one or two members chosen from the congregation at large (people who are not on committees) and one or two seats for volunteers;
- (4) all meetings of committees will be open to everyone in the congregation;
- (5) the function of the steering committee will be to coordinate activities of the other committees and to deal with activities outside the congregation.

Topix

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She's been appointed chairperson of the campus lesbian task force and she needs a thousand dollars.



outside community

